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# THE POPES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY



BY THE  
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During the Nineteenth Century there were six Popes in succession:—Pius VII. (Chiaramonti), Leo XII. (della Genga), Pius VIII. (Castiglione), Gregory XVI. (Capellari), Pius IX. (Mastai Ferretti), and Leo XIII. (Luigi Pecci). Concerning the first four, we have a book of personal "Recollections" from the eloquent pen of Cardinal Wiseman, and a companion book of personal "Recollections" from the incisive pen of Signor Gavazzi, who, while a monk, came to know Popery well from the inside, and afterwards, when he had become a pillar of the evangelical Free Church of Italy, made full and fearless use of his knowledge before crowded audiences in Britain, in those impassioned and captivating orations of his, salted with a sometimes playful and sometimes cutting Italian wit, which some of us still remember well. These two gifted authors and authorities present divergent estimates of the Pontiffs under their review, which may be conveniently set over against one another. The two latest and most outstanding Popes on our list—Pio Nono and Leo XIII.—come within living memory, and there is abundant material to show what manner of men and of hierarchs they were.



# THE <sup>at</sup> POPES- OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

## CHAPTER I.

### WHY TROUBLE TO ENGAGE IN SUCH AN OLD-WORLD STUDY?

**T**HE Popes of the Nineteenth Century." This may seem to some an out-of-the-way and far-away subject to expect readers to be interested in. "Why concern ourselves about those old men to-day?" says some impatient critic. "They are dead and gone; and to us, entering on the second quarter of the twentieth century, their pontificates seem already as ancient history. Why bother about them now? They are back numbers: let their story rest in peace on the dusty lumber-shelf! I have never taken much stock in Popes, and for dead and departed Popes I have absolutely no use."

#### The Danger of Ignorant Indifference.

Such is a too common and characteristic expression of the average British Protestant's apathetic aloofness with regard to the Vatican and its age-long line of quasi-divine inhabitants. These are to him just strangely-applauded foreign personalities living in a palace away in Italy, surrounded by much pomp and splendour: and it is no business of his if their followers or subjects hold them in peculiar reverence, and choose to speak with bated breath of "our Lord God the Pope" as "Vice-gerent of God," and "Vicar of Jesus Christ," and "Apostolic successor of St. Peter."

This easy unconcern may be appraised by some as "thoroughly English, you know." But the Popes, after all, have long been, and continue to be, at the head of a vast and closely-articulated organisation, inspired by a purpose and regulating a policy whose subtle influence makes itself felt throughout the world, and has an incidence on every department of human life. And John Bull—"good easy man"—can ill afford, if he but knew it, to treat this great system, so far-reaching and penetrating, with careless indifference or non-chalant disdain. The Papacy, if it had the power as it has the will, would govern the world; and we of this British nation and empire have peculiar reason to seek to acquaint ourselves with its true spirit, and to keep an eye on its practical policy.

#### The Papacy's World-embracing Project.

It is simple folly to ignore the fact that, with its world-embracing project in view, the Papacy's supreme ambition has for generations been to re-subjugate Britain, and to undo what its votaries regard and deplore as "the Deformation" in England and, if possible, in Scotland also. To accomplish this

sinister end the Pontiffs and Prelates of Rome, with the sinuous aid of their wily accomplices, the Jesuits, have bent their most intense and persevering endeavours for many a day and to this present hour.

The amazingly frank utterance of Archbishop (afterwards Cardinal) Manning, in which he disclosed the Romish plan of campaign, cannot be too often sounded into the ears of a too-unheeding British public. It implies an organisation with many branches, and a plan with many enthusiastic agents still at work within our realm :—

“ The nineteenth century will make a great epoch in the history of the Church. . . . It is good for us to be here in England. It is yours, right reverend fathers, to subjugate and to subdue, to bend and to break the will of an imperial race. . . . You have a great commission to fulfil, and great is the prize for which you strive. Surely a soldier's eye and a soldier's heart would choose by intuition this field of England for the warfare of the faith. . . . It is the head of Protestantism; the centre of its movements, and the stronghold of its powers. Weakened in England, it is paralysed everywhere. Conquered in England, it is conquered throughout the world. Once overthrown here, all is but a war of detail.”—(*Ecclesiastical Sermons : republished 1870*).

Thanks be to thee, proud and confident prelate, for thine outspokenness! Thou must needs have been carried away that day with the exuberance of thine own eloquence! But we may be permitted to place alongside of thy glowing picture of coming Papal conquest the warning caveat of that cool-headed Scot, Adam Smith of “ The Wealth of Nations,” when he pungently but truthfully wrote :—

“ The constitution of the Church of Rome may be considered the most formidable combination that was ever formed against the authority and security of civil government, as well as against the liberty, reason, and happiness of mankind.”

### A Summons to Face the Situation.

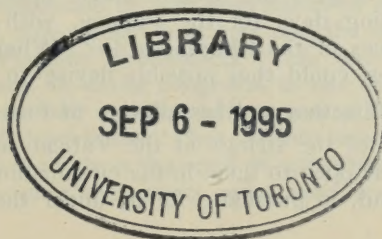
In the light of these two quotations, does it not become sensible Protestants to abjure the foolish method imputed to the ostrich, and to face manfully the facts? There is a loud present summons to such, both south and north of the Border, in this island which Providence has so long blessed with Gospel light and liberty, to be on vigilant guard against the continuous machinations and encroachments of a system whose progress and dominance, as universal past experience shows, means both moral and material blight. Let Britain beware not only of the Bolshevik propaganda emanating from Moscow, but of the equally zealous and more suave and serpentine internationale whose head-



quarters are in Rome, and whose proudest contemporary boast is the progressive success, in doing Rome's work, achieved by the so-called "Anglo-Catholics," in their sapping and mining operations within what used to be thankfully called among us "the great bulwark of the Reformation"—the Church of England.

Now, as Manning clearly recognised, the nineteenth century was a highly important era in the hoary and chequered history of the Church of Rome, especially as regards its aggressive influence in England. At the beginning of that century, the fortunes of the Papacy, in conflict with Napoleon Buona-parte and other hostile forces, were at an exceedingly low ebb. But a new current set in, and a period of recuperation followed, which, in spite of sundry checks and vicissitudes, placed Romanism in a very different position in Europe, and especially in Britain, by the end of the century, from that which it had held at the century's beginning. This result was the outcome of the astute and untiring pursuance of a well-defined and consistent policy under the six successive nineteenth century pontificates, the study of which may disclose some of the roots from whose development evil fruits of noxious growth still continue to appear.

Of the need of information on the subject in hand, I had rather a startling illustration a considerable while ago. While the nineteenth century was still running, I happened to ask an Edinburgh gentleman, intelligent and well-informed on many subjects, if he could name to me the first four Popes of the century. He looked perplexed, and kept silent. I mischievously offered him a prize if he would give me the name of any one of the four. With evident misgiving, he took the plunge, enquiring tentatively, "Was Innocent III. one of them?" To which I smilingly replied, "You are just about six centuries wrong. Try one more shot!" But nothing would induce him to compete further for the possible reward.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS VII. (1800-1823).

**T**HE first of the Nineteenth Century Pontificates began with the century. Pius VII. was appointed to the Papal Chair on March 14th, 1800, and continued to hold that exalted position till his death on August 20th, 1823. The fortunes of the Papacy were very low at the beginning of last century, and the new Pope, immediately finding himself up against the craft and might of Napoleon Buonaparte, had not his troubles far to seek.

**The French Revolution and the Papacy.**

Already, during the reign of his predecessor, Pius VI., which lasted till August, 1799, the Roman Curia had been involved in an almost deadly grapple with the French Republic. At the time of the Revolution the possessions of the Church in France were laid hold of by the State, and thousands of the recalcitrant clergy sent into exile. A new order of clergy was instituted by the National Assembly, under a scheme of popular election. Pius VI. attempted to protest—but in vain. It was made a crime to receive a Papal brief, and all religious Orders were suppressed. The Directory of Government proclaimed and treated the Roman Church as the irreconcilable enemy of the Republic.

When Napoleon came into prominence and power, he dealt heavy blows at the Papal Government beyond France, and within the confines of Italy itself. Under the Treaty of Tolentino, in January, 1797, the whole of Romagna had to be surrendered to France, a French garrison to be admitted to Ancona, "our Lady of Loretto" to be transferred to Paris, Avignon to be yielded to the Republic, with 30 millions of francs from the Papal treasury. Following on the defeat of the Austrian defenders of the Papacy, the Pope himself was hurried from Rome to Florence, thence to Leghorn, and thence to Valence, where, on the date mentioned above (August, 1799), he died.

These were stern measures—"hard lines!"—illustrative of what overweening Erastianism, and overweening Ultramontanism, no less, can do for its own ends, when it gets the uncontrollable upper hand. And those were gloomy and depressing days for the Papacy, with an outlook dark indeed. What were the princes of the Church to do? What, in such overwhelmingly adverse circumstances, could they possibly devise to turn back the flood?

**Election and Installation of Pius VII.**

The wily pullers of the strings at the Vatican adopted the shrewdest and most promising course open to them in the circumstances—a policy of meekness and conciliation. And, in pursuance of it, under the guidance of that master



of diplomacy, Cardinal Consalvi, the College of Cardinals, in solemn conclave assembled, elected to the Papedom one who, though perhaps inferior to certain others in intellectual capacity, was likely, because of his former utterances on democracy, to be *persona grata* with Napoleon—viz., Cardinal Chiaramonti.

Events were, in considerable measure, to justify the wisdom of the choice then made. Napoleon responded, in some sense and degree, to the policy of conciliation. In proclaiming the revolution ended, he proceeded to liberate imprisoned priests, and to annul certain restrictions upon worship. Again, after the decisive battle of Marengo, which laid the whole of Upper Italy at his feet, he declared that he would firmly protect the Catholic religion, and do what he could to reconcile his country fully to the Head of the Roman Catholic Church.

These assurances, it is true, did not afterwards turn out to carry all that the words seemed to convey, and the recently-elected Pope was to see little reason, from his own point of view, to be grateful for the autocrat's promised "protection." But he patiently strove to maintain a *modus vivendi* with his wilful "protector," and, though in the coming storm his head was sometimes submerged beneath the waves, he was destined, after all, to outlive Napoleon, and to skipper "the barque of St. Peter" amid quieter waters. We may here glance at the Pope's antecedents.

### The Early Career and Training of Chiaramonti.

Gregory Barnabas Chiaramonti was born at Cesena, in Central Italy, in 1742. Both his father and his mother were of noble birth. The latter was a lady of deep religious fervour, whose predispositions led her at length to the cloister. When her son Gregory attained his majority, in 1763, she entered a Carmelite Convent, where she died eight years later at the age of sixty. She cherished the loftiest ecclesiastical ambitions for her boy, and it was doubtless largely through her influence that young Chiaramonti, at the age of 16, joined the community of "the religious" in the Benedictine Abbey near his native place, and submitted himself to the rigours of the monastic novitiate. The discipline he there underwent may have helped to prepare the future Pope for the long term of passive resistance he had afterwards to endure. It may also help to explain the lack of independent initiative and the irresolution he sometimes displayed, which Wiseman pronounces "his one flaw." Life in a religious "community" was no doubt congenial to one whom he describes as "the mildest of men," naturally predisposed to accept the lot of "absolute abandonment to the care of Providence"; but, as Wiseman himself allows, it is a mode of life which is apt "to blunt the edge of self-reliance."

The intellectual gifts of Chiaramonti were not, apparently, of special

brilliance, but neither were they to be despised. He was early made a teacher in the Benedictine College at Parma, and afterwards at Rome. At the age of 30, he became a Doctor in Theology, and for six years he filled the chair of Canon Law. In 1782, at the age of 40, he was promoted to the Bishopric of Tivoli, and was created Cardinal three years later, and translated to the See of Imola.

### **Pope Countenancing Napoleon's Crowning of Himself as Emperor.**

When Pius VII. attained the Popedom, in 1800, Napoleon Buonaparte was not yet Emperor of France in name. This he became only in 1804, and was crowned King of Italy in the following year. But as first Consul of the French Republic, and adored of the people, he was as masterful in mood and methods as any Emperor could be, and he and the Pope at once got into grips in a struggle, obstinate on both sides, and often tensely dramatic, which lasted till Napoleon's downfall in 1815.

A few months after his entry into Rome as Pope, in July, 1800, and a few weeks after the Battle of Marengo, which ended so disastrously for Austria, Pius VII. soon found himself engaged in anxious negotiations with the conqueror. Napoleon, wishing to consolidate his rule in France by conciliation of the Church, proposed, on conditions, to withdraw the French troops from Rome and to make other concessions, under a Concordat, which was actually agreed to and signed by the Papal See in July, 1801. Shortly afterwards, in April, 1802, he signed "Organic Articles" ("Les Articles Organiques"), professedly framed for the carrying out of the Concordat, but embodying provisions exceedingly distasteful to Rome—guaranteeing as they did, for example, equal liberty of worship to Protestants, and forbidding Roman Catholic priests to assail their religion. The Pope emphatically protested. But, the Concordat having been ratified in the hope of "reconciling heaven with the Revolution," a truce was observed, during which the French Bishops found it prudent, after all, to eulogise Napoleon as the Restorer of Religion. A little later, Pope Pius was successfully cajoled by Napoleon and Talleyrand to countenance by his presence the ceremony at St. Cloud on December 2nd, 1804, at which Buonaparte crowned himself as Emperor amid popular acclamation.

### **Subsequent Struggle between Pope and Emperor.**

The Pope, in return for this act of complaisance on his own part, took occasion to impress on Napoleon that, like a second Charlemagne, he should constitute himself the defender and promoter of the Roman Church. But the autocrat deduced from the parallel merely his own right to demand of Pius, as subsidiary sovereign of Rome, an alliance against England and Russia, and



the expulsion of their subjects from the States of the Church. "All my enemies," said he to the Pope, "must be yours." Pius held back, and forthwith the imperial screw was applied. The Adriatic ports and then Civita Vecchia and Rome itself were occupied by French troops, and an imperial decree was signed annexing Rome and the rest of the Papal territory to the French Empire. Such drastic incursions drew forth, not unnaturally, on Napoleon's head the Bull of Excommunication (10th June, 1809). This in turn, just as naturally, resulted in the Pope being made really prisoner, and carried off to Grenoble, and thence to Savona, and finally (in June, 1812), to Fontainebleau. And there occurred what was counted in Papal circles a serious lapse on the part of Pius VII. and the one tragic blot on his life.

The Pope, kept apart from his Cardinals and all consultation with them, and dispirited by his long exile from Rome, was induced to sign a new Concordat (1813),\* which practically made Napoleon complete master of the situation. It provided, among other things, that the Pope should accept Avignon instead of Rome for his residence, and live there as the head of a kind of Western Patriarchate under imperial supervision. Pius stipulated that the Concordat should be submitted for approval to the College of Cardinals before being published; and whenever they gained his ear they persuaded the Pope to revoke his consent to such a betrayal of Papal interests. This he penitently did, confessing and abjuring "a deed ill done," which he was resolved, by Divine help, "thoroughly to amend." Thus was "the one error of his life and pontificate," according to Wiseman, "nobly and successfully repaired." But the recanting allocution, in which he sought to remedy his blunder, is a curious commentary beforehand on the Papal Infallibility Decree!

Napoleon's course of conquest was now, however, nearly run. After the reverse he suffered at Leipzig, he hinted, under stress of weather, at certain concessions he might make to the Church. Emboldened by news of the change in the European situation, and encouraged by his Cardinals, the Pope declined to negotiate further except from Rome, to which he was actually permitted to return. On 24th May, 1814, accordingly, the Pontiff re-entered the Eternal City, after an absence of five years. But before that date the Allies had captured the fortifications of Paris, and Napoleon had been compelled to sign his abdication—on 4th April, 1814—in the very room at Fontainebleau where Pius VII. had lately been a prisoner. The escape from Elba soon followed. But so also did Waterloo, on 18th June, 1815. After what took place there, Napoleon ceased from troubling, both in Rome and in many other quarters.

\* The room is still shown at Fontainebleau in which this Concordat was signed by the Pope. It is one of the thirteen luxurious apartments assigned to Pius VII. in the magnificent chateau during his two years' detention there.

### **Latter Part of Pius VII.'s Pontificate: Consalvi as Delegate to England.**

At this point there comes into increased prominence an ecclesiastic of transcendent ability and historic fame, who had already distinguished himself so efficiently at the Papal Court that, as early as 1806, Napoleon found it expedient to have him banished from Rome to Rheims. His guiding hand, as Secretary of State, was felt, if not seen, in all Papal transactions up to the date of his banishment. And his shaping influence on the policy of the Curia was still more marked and manifest from the time of the Pope's restoration to Rome in 1814 to the death of Pius in 1823.

Almost immediately after the earlier of these events, Cardinal Consalvi was sent as the Pope's representative to England (in June, 1814), and had thus the distinction of being the first Cardinal to land on British soil as the legate and plenipotentiary of the Roman See since the days of Cardinal Pole—that is, for about 260 years. From that time onward he made it his business to smooth the way for closer relationships between Britain and the Vatican. It was largely through Consalvi, for example, that the English Roman Catholic College in Rome, which had been uninhabited and desolate for nearly a generation, was resuscitated in 1818—one of the six youths then sent to colonise it afresh being the future Cardinal Wiseman. Consalvi was, without doubt, one of those who most effectively prepared for the fateful Catholic emancipation agitation of 1829. To him, as Papal representative at the Congress of Vienna (1815), it was mainly due that, in spite of Austrian contentions, the whole of the Papal States were restored to the Pope.

Of Pius VII.'s Papal administration after 1815, little need be related here. While instituting some minor local reforms, it was on the whole of a reactionary and ultramontane character. One of this Pope's acts, for which posterity has little reason to bless his memory, was

### **The Restoration of the Order of the Jesuits.**

One infallible Pope, Clement XIV. (Ganganelli), had, so recently as 1773, suppressed the Society of Jesus by solemn Papal ban "for ever and to all eternity"; but now another Pope, no less infallible (according to the retro-active and irreversible Vatican decree and dogma of Papal infallibility afterwards promulgated in 1870), took it upon him to re-establish the Order "in all countries whatsoever." Which of the two contradictory infallible Popes was right? Clement would appear to have had reason on his side, for the slimy and pernicious activities of the Jesuits have been found to be so mischievous and dangerous that they have been expelled no fewer than 70 times by different European Governments, including bigoted Roman Catholic countries like Austria and Portugal.



The policy of the Roman Church, which had been largely defensive, took with increasing boldness the line of offence, not only while Pius reigned but throughout the century, and made itself felt in many lands. The forward political movement was, however, accompanied by a very sluggish and backward policy in Rome itself. There the intransigent do-nothing ecclesiastics vested with authority in matters of local administration took their own lazy way in face of the advice of Consalvi himself, whom they began to regard as "infected with liberalism." He wished burial in Churches to be prohibited on sanitary grounds, but they resumed and extended the practice, which brought considerable fees to the exchequer. Nor was the scourge of brigandage put down with a firm hand in the Papal States: the less exciting method was adopted, as Gavazzi reveals, of quieting the ringleaders by gifting them with pensions. The lighting of the streets by gas was rejected and vaccination prohibited as "French practices." The neglected Campagna was left to be a hot-bed of malaria.

The present writer can testify from personal observation during a visit to Rome in September, 1870, that most of these backward conditions prevailed until the Italian troops took possession of Rome as the "Capitale d'Italia unita." That soon made a difference, and such a difference! None can realise how great it is, so well as one who saw Rome as it was in the very week when Victor Emmanuel's army marched victoriously along the road now known as the Via Venti Settembre (20th September).

#### Pius VII.'s Attitude to Bible Societies.

Only one more fact illustrative of the trend of the first of the nineteenth century pontificates can be cited here—the promulgation of the Bull of 29th June, 1816, in condemnation of Bible Societies. It is significant of the estimate and treatment of the Holy Scriptures, persistent though sometimes veiled, by the Church of Rome all along the centuries. Pius VII., "the mildest of men," so "gentle and sweet-tongued," denounced Bible Societies as "a pestilence"—"impious machinations of innovators"—"a crafty device for undermining the very foundations of religion": and he roundly declared it to be "evident from experience that the Holy Scriptures, when circulated in the vulgar tongue, have produced more harm than benefit." The obscuring of the material light on the streets of Rome had thus a sadder parallel in the attempt to obscure the spiritual light of the blessed Gospel, not only within the borders of the Papal See, but, so far as possible, throughout the world of men.

But even Popes have to die, and the strings of Papal policy to pass into other hands. The death of Pius, hastened by a fall, occurred two years before his pontificate reached "the years of Peter"—on 20th August, 1823. And soon another, though not for nearly so long a period, reigned in his stead.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PONTIFICATE OF LEO XII. (1823-1829).

THE second nineteenth century Pope was Hannibal Della Genga, who ascended the Papal throne as Leo XII. fully a month after the death of Pius VII. He was elected on September 28th, 1823, as the result of inter-Cardinalate intrigue and compromise. His success was largely due to the converging antipathies among the Cardinals to Consalvi, who, as virtual ruler of the departed Pope, had been rather high-handed in his dealings to suit the susceptibilities of the other gentlemen of the purple. Another thing in Della Genga's favour was the feeble state of his health, though no more than 63 years of age. As pictured by Wiseman, he was tall and graceful in carriage, with an eye soft and penetrating, and a voice bland and winning, but, withal, "feeble, emaciated and sallow." These latter characteristics suggested the probability of a fresh election soon, with a sporting chance of personal luck in a future distribution of pensions and perquisites among favourite prelates. With such considerations in view, Della Genga was elected, notwithstanding his unpopularity in France. The consent of the French ambassador, as is alleged by Gavazzi, was obtained by a verbal quibble.

Leo's accession to the pontifical throne was the signal for the fall of Consalvi from office, he being credited with having opposed Della Genga's promotion. In his room Cardinal Somaglia was appointed the new Pope's Secretary of State. But in any case Consalvi's health was by this time broken, and he died in the following January, but not before there had been a reconciliation between him and Leo. The latter was himself so ill immediately after his elevation that recovery seemed hopeless, but he marvellously revived, and was able to assume official duties soon. One of his first acts, ten days before Consalvi's death, was to name that experienced minister Prefect of Propaganda, and to receive from his lips in outline his whole scheme of policy at home and abroad. There can be no doubt that, though Consalvi was himself removed by death, his spirit and aims continued largely to inspire the policy of Leo, to whom he said, among other things, in their parting interview: "Live, and Catholic Emancipation will take place in England during your pontificate. I have worked hard for it, and began to do so when in London."

**The New Pope's Antecedents.**

As regards Leo's antecedents, he was born at the Della Genga family seat in Romagna on August 20th, 1760. He was educated first at Osimo, and then at Rome. He is said to have committed homicide in his youth, and to have



received, along with the Papal pardon, the advice to devote his life to the Church. He was ordained priest on June 4th, 1783, and was by and by taken into Pius VI.'s household. The delicate duty of preaching a funeral discourse, in 1790, over Joseph II. of Austria, who had often been at loggerheads with the Papacy, was so tactfully performed by the young cleric as to win the admiration of the Pope; and preferment soon followed. In 1793 he was made Archbishop of Tyre, and was sent as Nuncio, first to Lucerne and then to Cologne. In 1805 he filled the post of Papal plenipotentiary at Ratisbon, and after residing for a time at Munich was transferred to Paris for diplomatic duty. Returning afterwards to Rome, he retired for a few years to the Abbey of Monticelli; but at the time of Pius VII.'s restoration to the Papal city, Della Genga was brought out of his retirement and made the bearer of congratulations to Louis XVIII. at Paris, on his assumption of the throne after the downfall of Napoleon. From this mission he returned in shattered health, and expected an early decease. But he revived, and in 1816 was made bishop of Sinigaglia, and in 1818 became a Cardinal. Then in 1820 he was appointed Vicar of Rome, a post which he held for three years, until, as we have seen, he was elevated to the supreme position of (so-called) Vicar of Jesus Christ, in 1823.

### Leo XII.'s Six Years' Pontificate.

The ill-health which appears to have burdened him all through his pontificate may have contributed to produce a certain austerity and an occasional capriciousness which characterised this Pope's administration. In the main, he continued the reactionary policy of his predecessor, in favouring the interests of the nobility and in abetting the activities of the Jesuits. To the "Society of Jesus" he restored the schools of the great Roman College, which had been in possession of the "seculars" since the days of Pope Ganganelli, and endowed classes conducted by the Jesuits in the old German College.

While Wiseman lavishes praise on Leo for the prudence and moderation of his policy, and for the modest self-abnegation of his personal character, Gavazzi charges him with bigotry and obstinacy, and ridicules his attempts at reform as meddlesome and immature. But some credit does appear to be due to Leo for zealous efforts to eradicate certain civil and ecclesiastical abuses, even at the cost of a good deal of personal unpopularity. He uttered himself in favour of temperance and social purity, as well as of financial economy and higher education. He vigorously put down profane sauntering by visitors during service in St. Peter's and other churches, although, according to Gavazzi, by winking at worse priestly delinquencies, he "removed a corn from the foot, but left a horn on the forehead." By prohibiting drinking on the

premises in wine shops, he incurred not a little odium from both the vendors and the roysterers, who resented the inconvenience of having to carry the liquor out of doors for consumption. One favourite device of Leo's was to pay surprise visits, not always welcome, to religious and charitable institutions.

### Leo's Foreign Policy, and Interest in England.

It may be confidently said that in his foreign policy Leo was happier and more successful than in his home administration. It was marked by mingled tact and pertinacity, and the Pope himself sometimes querulously declared that, through concordats and measures of diplomacy, he "had obtained more from his enemies than from his children," the discontent and internal feuds among whom often gave him a heavy heart. Like his predecessor, Leo XII. kept a shrewd eye upon England, and sought to ingratiate himself with members of the English race. Wiseman lauds the personal interest he took in the young students of the English College, and tells of one occasion on which they had the privilege of dining and enjoying familiar converse with the Pontiff in the English villa at Monte Porzio. It was his expressed desire to make the Coadjutor of the Western District in England, Dr. Barnes, a Cardinal; and it was at his instance that an English congregation was formed in Rome and accommodated in the Church of Gesù e Maria in the Corso.

Leo lived almost, though not quite, long enough to see the "Catholic Emancipation Act" passed by the British Parliament on April 13th, 1829. It had been announced as an imminent measure in the King's Speech on February 5th, and it received the Royal Assent on April 25th. But Leo breathed his last on February 10th, 1829—little more than a couple of months before that fateful enactment, so adroitly worked for and so epoch-marking, was grafted on the Constitution.

Even Wiseman has nothing to say of the regret with which the announcement of Leo's death was received. Gavazzi, on his part, affirms with some harshness: "Leo XII. died despised of all, having displeased all: the Cardinals, because he would act for himself—the priests, because he discovered their speculations—the Liberals, because of his persecutions—his subjects generally, because his ill-digested reforms made matters only worse."



#### CHAPTER IV. THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS VIII. (1829-1830).

**T**HE third pontificate on our list was of brief duration, and calls for no lengthened treatment. The "Conclave"—which is the term reserved for the assemblage of Cardinals when convened for the election of a Pope, as differentiated from more ordinary "Consistories"—did not take long to reach a decision in this particular case. Leo XII. had died on February 10th, and, cumbrous as the mode of election by the segregated fathers is, his successor was enthroned by March 31st, 1829. He died on December 1st of the following year, so that the pontifical reign of Francisco Xavier Castiglioni, under the official title of Pius VIII., lasted only twenty months in all.

##### Early Career of the New Pope, Castiglioni.

Castiglioni was born at Cingoli on November 20th, 1761, and was educated by the Jesuits of Romagna. At a comparatively early age he had reached episcopal rank, being made Bishop of Montalto in 1800. Because of his zeal for Austrian interests, he was banished by the French, first to Milan, and then to Mantua. But the sun shone on him later, for he became Cardinal, and was appointed, in 1816, Bishop of the See of Cesena—the birth-place of the then reigning Pope, Pius VII. With this Pontiff he was a favourite, and was promoted by him in 1821 to the desirable diocese of Frascati, in the immediate neighbourhood of Rome. Pius VII. even foreshadowed for him as probable the supreme preferment to the Papal Chair. On one occasion, when they were conferring about business, the Pope said pleasantly to Cardinal Castiglioni—"Your Holiness Pius the VIII. may one day settle this matter." And, when elected bye-and-bye to the Popedom, Castiglioni recalled the conversation, acted upon the hint, and chose "Pius VIII." as his designation in memory of his erstwhile friend and benefactor. It was largely through the influence of Cardinal Albani, the accredited representative of Austria on the Conclave (who afterwards became his Secretary of State) that Castiglioni was elected over the head of an abler rival, Cardinal Capellari. But the latter had not long to wait before entering, as Gregory XVI., on possession of the coveted Chair.

##### His Personal Characteristics.

Pius VIII. was evidently not either a commanding or an attractive figure in personal appearance. While crediting him with a "countenance noble and gentle," Wiseman has to make mention of what he learnedly calls "a chronic herpetic affection in the neck," which "kept his head turned and bowed down." In the photograph bound up with the Cardinal's "Recollections,"

this wry neck gives the Pope a rather quizzical and sly appearance, scarcely compatible with the dignity and majesty to be expected in a vicarious human embodiment of the Divine. The "herpetic affection," or something else, kept the Pope in such pain as to make him confessedly irritable, but trying outbreaks were quickly atoned for by "the blindest of smiles, and a condescending apology for infirmity of temper." Pius VIII. seems, indeed, to have been naturally of an amiable disposition. He was devoted to music and fond of company. One of his first acts was to remove the restrictions imposed on the wine-shops by his more austere predecessor; and he bade fair to be regarded in different quarters as a popular enough Pontiff.

### **His Attitude to Public Affairs.**

Pius VIII. was a man of some ability and learning, well versed especially in Canon Law. But he had no great love for affairs of State, preferring to leave them largely in the hands of his Secretary, Cardinal Albani, who was of the school of Consalvi and conducted the Papal policy on similar lines. Perhaps the vehemence of the encyclical by Pius against the liberty of the Press and the strict ground he took up toward the Prussian bishops on the subject of mixed marriages indicated an intolerance of spirit respecting public questions which, had he lived longer, might have shadowed his initial popularity. But he was not spared long enough to ruffle many susceptibilities; and Signor Gavazzi himself says of him with genial sarcasm: "Pius VIII. died approved by all, for, if he did no good as Pope, he did no harm; and his early death was popular, because of the possibilities and hopes associated with a quickly returning change."

### **His Brief Pontificate a Period of Notable Events.**

Though the reign of Pius VIII. was brief and in itself uneventful, the period it covered was marked by two outstanding events—both of them of a revolutionary character.

The first was "Catholic Emancipation" in England, the news of which was enthusiastically carried by Wiseman to the Pope. The English Roman Catholics resident in Rome held a festival in celebration of the event. But, according to Wiseman, the Roman populace showed no appreciation of the importance of what had been achieved, and read as though they understood not the device triumphantly emblazoned on the English College walls—"Emancipazione Cattolica."

The other event was a more obtrusive revolution in France, which resulted in the Duke of Orleans, Louis Philippe, being set upon the throne on August 9th, 1830, as "King of the French," in place of Charles X., whose despotic and ultramontane régime had become intolerable. The discontent and agitation



spread to the Netherlands, and Holland and Belgium were separated. Revolution reared its head in Poland also, and Rome itself was not exempt from the restless forces of the time, the Papal States being honeycombed by secret societies like the Carbonari, whose activities it was no easy matter to suppress.

The outcome of these movements, as we shall see, was to become more manifest in subsequent Pontificates. Suffice it here to say that the Vatican knew how to accept the inevitable in emerging situations and in times of stress to bow, for the time at least, before the storm.

#### CHAPTER V.

### IV. THE PONTIFICATE OF GREGORY XVI. (1831-1846).

THE successor of Pius VIII. not only reigned for a much longer period, but was a much more notable man. He belonged, not, like the two Popes who immediately preceded him, to the "secular" clergy, but to the "regulars"—i.e., those bound by the monastic rules and vows. It is noteworthy that in modern times there has been a frequent alternation in the choice of Popes between these two great sections of the clergy. Capellari, afterwards Gregory XVI., belonged to the Camaldolese Order of Monks.

#### Capellari, a Monastic Pope.

Bartolomeo Alberto Capellari was born at Belluno, in Lombardy, on September 18th, 1765. In 1783 he entered the Camaldolese Monastery of San Michele at Venice. In 1795 he was sent to Rome, and there attracted special notice by the publication, in 1799, of what was considered a learned and able treatise, directed against the Jansenists—"Il Trionfo della Santa Sede é della Chiesa." He was made an Abbot in 1805, and exercised his office partly at the monastery of St. Gregory at Rome, and partly at his old monastery at Venice. He seems to have personally escaped many of the troubles which afflicted the leading Roman Churchmen during the first two decades of the century, cultivating literary tastes in his quiet retreat—and enjoying also, it is said, the more jovial side of the monastic life. By-and-by, in recognition of his practical abilities, he was made Councillor of the Inquisition, Prefect of Propaganda, and Examiner of Bishops at Rome. And finally, after a 64 days' Conclave—in which, but for the veto of Spain, Cardinal Giustiniani would have been elected—Capellari was made Pope on February 2nd, 1831.

At his coronation, being a monk, he had to be consecrated as a bishop. The moment when he became Pope he was the Supreme Head of the Church, with the right to appoint or to depose bishops; but, as a monk, he could not

have ordained or consecrated bishops, without having himself received ordination at the hands of the episcopal authorities.

### A Stormy Beginning to His Pontificate.

Gregory XVI. chose his pontifical title partly, no doubt, because of his long association with the monastery of St. Gregory, but partly also, in all probability, because of his admiration for an earlier Gregory, the seventh of that ilk, the imperious Pope Hildebrand. If Capellari was minded to model his policy on that of this most masterful of Pontiffs, he had early opportunity of showing his quality. Hardly was he seated in the Papal chair when the ominous roar of revolutionary cannon was heard bursting over the Papal territory from the direction of Bologna. The insurrectionary movement caught on, and spread from Bologna—which had expelled the Papal legate and proclaimed a Republic—to Ferrara, Umbria, and the whole of Romagna. Soon a little army, calling itself the Legion of Pallas, was marching upon Rome in the cause of freedom. In its ranks were two young Buonapartes—one of whom, Charles, was killed in the fray, while the other, Louis Napoleon, outlived his republican enthusiasms and contrived to become Emperor of the French.

### The Revolution drastically quelled, but not crushed out.

The Pope succeeded, for the time, in nipping the insurrection in the bud. He cajoled its leader, and secured delay. Then he surreptitiously invoked the armed aid of Austria, which promptly suppressed the rising. Abortive, however, as the movement was at that stage, and Draconian in their severity as were the methods employed by Gregory to keep the vanquished provinces in abject subjection, the latter were still possessed by a spirit of revolt, intensified in bitterness by the Pope's shamefully severe treatment of them. This appeared to impartial eyes so outrageous, indeed, that the five chief European Powers felt themselves constrained to intervene with a joint remonstrance, urging that "the Papacy in its policy should take a form more consistent with the usages of European society, and with the wants of the age and of its subjects." Thereupon the Vatican "made promises to the ear, but broke them to the hope." While keeping the Powers in play, and seeking to foment discord in the "Concert of Europe," the Pope continued to do his best to crush the rebelliously-minded in detail—by executions, banishments, imprisonments. A fresh insurrection resulted. This brought in the Austrians again. But also the French, who, as an offset to the Austrian occupation of Bologna, thought it prudent to occupy Ancona. Superficial order was then restored, under an extraordinary system of espionage; but the simmering discontent continued. Later on, its intensity had striking manifestation in the revolution of 1848, and found its culmination in the capture of Rome in 1870.



### Tactful Policy Abroad, Severely Repressive at Home.

While high-handed enough in his dealings with his own subjects, Pope Gregory, along with his Prime Minister, Cardinal Lambruschini, showed not a little tact and prudence in his relations with the European Powers. He had his external conflicts with Prussia and with France. In Prussia the controversy arose over the question of mixed marriages. In France it was concerned with the movement headed by "the three pilgrims of God and liberty," as they called themselves—Lamenais, Lacordaire, and Montalembert. In both disputes the Pope showed much astuteness and great determination in upholding the Ultramontane view and position. In one of his briefs he characteristically inveighed against every effort after liberty, declaring the present hour to be "the hour of darkness, when unbridled wickedness, shameless knowledge and unbounded licence were triumphant—when the divine authority of the Church was being assailed, subjected to worldly considerations, and shamefully enslaved." He derided "the absurd and erroneous notion, or rather frenzy, that liberty of conscience is to be granted and guaranteed to all alike"; and liberty of the Press he stigmatised as "that detestable and never-to-be-sufficiently-execrated liberty." In all this, be it noted, he was but acting in harmony with customary Papal policy, as frankly expressed in Consalvi's *obiter dictum*—"It is of the essence of the Catholic Church to be intolerant." At the same time, Gregory was shrewd enough to put forth the soft paw to outsiders when it suited him. In his bull "*Solicitude ecclesiarum*," for instance, he proclaimed a principle of action highly convenient in days of rapid change in governments and dynasties—"that the Holy See recognises governments established *de facto*, without thereby going into the question of abstract rights."

### Encouragement of Superstition.

During this reign positive influence was exerted for the spreading and deepening of popular superstition. Thus, the Holy Coat of Trèves was put on exhibition in 1845; and a circular by Bishop Arnoldi set in motion the whole machinery of pilgrimages, processions, and relic-worship—such as the world has later seen in yet larger operation at Lourdes. It is calculated that upwards of 1½ millions of pilgrims were attracted by the Holy Coat to Treves. A counter movement arose in Germany, headed by a priest named Ronge, who protested against the imposture. In a courageous letter—the first edition of which, consisting of 50,000 copies, was bought at Leipzig within a fortnight—he denounced Arnoldi as "the Tetzels of the 19th century," and pithily admonished him that "as bishop he should have known that Christ had bequeathed to His apostles and followers *not His coat*, which belonged to the executioners, *but His Spirit*." The Ronge movement, however, was successfully damped down, and the musty garment at Treves is still held in sacred repute.

### **Tightening the Papal Grip on England.**

It is important to notice that Gregory XVI. advanced upon the policy of his predecessors in the attention he bestowed upon England. As Prefect of Propaganda he had long been minutely acquainted with the religious position and prospect in every part of the British dominions, and particularly in England itself. On becoming Pope, he increased the Vicars' Apostolic there to eight, by subdividing the four vicariates established in the reign of James II. and appointing an additional bishop to each. One of these was Wiseman himself, who, since local titles were then forbidden to Romish dignitaries by British law, was designated "Bishop of Melipotamus." Gregory, in conversation with the future English Cardinal, distinctly foreshadowed the establishment of the Romish Hierarchy in England. He found it prudent not to hasten unduly a measure so far-reaching and so likely to be startling. But he set things in train for it, and ordered prayers to be offered in all the churches for the early restoration of England to the Roman see; and only four years after Gregory's death, which occurred in 1846, the Papal Aggression was vigorously set on foot, under his successor, Pius IX.—with Wiseman, first as Archbishop and then as Cardinal, at its head.

### **Gregory as a Man.**

The personal characteristics of Gregory XVI. can hardly be called attractive. His countenance is certainly the least presentable among the four portraits of Popes furnished in Wiseman's volume. The Cardinal—wise man!—is careful to say little, in this case, about the Pope's physical appearance. But Gavazzi makes great play—not in the best taste—over Gregory's repellent aspect, attributing his red, swollen nose and watery eyes to his too generous daily potations. While Wiseman speaks of "the virtuous Gregory" and "this excellent Pontiff," and clothes him not in purple, but in white—the colour of his habit as a Carnaldolese monk, which he continued to wear throughout as monk, cardinal, and Pope—Gavazzi has quite a different tale to tell. He does not hesitate to assail, in the most explicit terms, Gregory's private character, in other respects than addiction to the bottle. He affirms that all posts under him were practically at the bidding of the Pope's barber, Gaetanino Moroni, who was "the incarnation of robbery and corruption"—and with whose wife, "la bella Gaetanina," popularly regarded as "the chère amie of His Holiness," Gregory, he declares, was on terms of scandalous intimacy. Signor Gavazzi enters, in support of these charges, into a number of details which it would not be edifying to reproduce here.

### **Gregory as a Ruler.**

Wiseman's eulogies of "this excellent Pontiff," Gavazzi attributes to



caste prejudice, and still more to gratitude for the personal favours and advantages bestowed on him by Gregory. For himself, while conceding that the Pope was "a jovial friendly man by reputation," he declares that "few names in history have been cursed as his by his subjects," and that "Gregory XVI. would have been dethroned had it not been for foreign intervention." He affirms that "the memory of this drunken Nero of the tiara is regarded in the Roman States as a cursed memory."

It may be alleged that Gavazzi was a biased witness, and sometimes paints with too broad and black a brush. But, making every allowance for the circumstance that Gavazzi was himself an active revolutionary, and, in consequence, suffered many things at the hands of the Papal authorities, the corruption that prevailed during Gregory's administration was too unquestionably dire and manifest to be plausibly denied. Gavazzi gives us an illustrative leaf out of his own experience. When he was cast into prison by the Pope for agitating on behalf of liberty, some "persons of influence and connected with government," who were friendly to him, suggested to him two methods by which he could obtain release. One was to send a certain number of gold pistoles to Gaetanino, the all-powerful tonsorial artist; the other to solicit the mediation of some of the concubines of prelates and cardinals, a list of whose names was obligingly supplied! Gavazzi adds that he "preferred to remain in captivity rather than to obtain my freedom by such vile instrumentalities." But by-and-by the freedom of exile became his, and the whirligig of time at length brought in its revenges, when, Rome having been captured in 1870 and made the capital of a United Italy, Gavazzi returned to the Eternal City and freely preached the Gospel there. And now, as the present writer saw recently, the marble bust of the revolutionary ex-monk has an honoured place among the memorial statues of patriotic heroes which adorn the Monte Janicolo at Rome.

### **The Deplorable Misgovernment of the Papal States.**

It needs no *advocatus Diaboli* to impeach the mal-administration of Rome and its environs under Gregory XVI. Wiseman claims for him great enlightenment, and descants on his services to art, in exploring the ancient Forum, and in establishing the Etruscan and Egyptian museums, and in encouraging Mezzofanti and Mai in their fruitful researches among the ancient manuscripts in the Vatican Library. But he charitably omits the darker shades in the picture—an omission liberally repaired by Signor Gavazzi. Features like these:—The insanitary condition of the capital itself, with its heaps of filth and offal (*immondezajo*) allowed to accumulate in the piazzas for a month, before being cast into the "yellow Tiber"; the neglected and noxious

state of the surrounding Campagna, which, as a hotbed of malaria, infected the city with the scourge of a deadly plague that carried off its hundreds, if not thousands, of victims during this pontificate.

There was a woeful lack of enterprise—except in political intrigue. Improvements in agriculture and rural amenities were discouraged, though a use was found for bovines in the bull-fights permitted in the mausoleum of Augustus on Sundays. The high-toned government sought to replete its emptied treasury by State lotteries, and by the farming of taxes. Gas companies were prohibited, and railways and telegraphs put under the ban.

### A Popular and Pungent Pasquinade on the Death of Gregory.

The true sentiments of the Italian people are often still expressed in witty rhymes, or in humorous but caustic lampoons, known as "pasquins" or "pasquinades"—a name reminiscent of Pasquino, a sarcastic tailor of the 15th century, whose mordant satires had great vogue in his time. When Pope Gregory died, an amusing pasquinade, which had the sting of truth in it, gave voice to the popular estimate of that disappointing Pontiff and his paternal government. It ran on this wise:—St. Peter was leading Pope Gregory, after death, to Paradise. The journey seemed hard and tedious to an aged man, and Gregory plaintively ejaculated: "How is this, St. Peter, I did not know that Paradise is so far from the Vatican?" To which St. Peter replied: "If you had allowed the construction of railways and steamers in your State we should have arrived long ago. But now you must stop a while in Purgatory." After spending some time, with more or less profit, in Purgatory, Gregory was led further on his way, and, coming in sight of Paradise, the Pope asked St. Peter why his last predecessors and other habitants of heaven did not hasten out to meet him. "Dear Gregory," replied St. Peter, "as for the Popes, there are few of them in heaven; moreover, the news of your death has not reached those who are there, as it would have done if you had established telegraphs and granted the freedom of the Press!" When the Saint and the Pope arrived at the gate of Paradise, St. Peter requested Gregory for his key, which, after some time, he found and produced. But unhappily it proved to be only the key of his wine cellar! And now the two were parted. St. Peter was admitted within the gates; but his companion was lost amid the fog!

These things are an allegory. In extolling Pope Gregory, Wiseman speaks of "his edifying end," while Gavazzi accredits him with "an execrated memory." He appears, at all events, to have departed, like Jehoram, "without being desired." *Sic transit gloria mundi!*



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS IX. (1846-1878).

THE successor of Gregory XVI., John Mastai Ferretti, was, perhaps, a less able man intellectually, but was distinctly his superior morally, and had a much more illustrious, as well as protracted pontificate. After a brief Conclave of about 48 hours, he was proclaimed Pope—the 262nd in so-called “Apostolic Succession”—on June 17th, 1846. He chose the title of Pius Ninth, whose Italian equivalent, “Pio Nono,” was destined to be one of the most familiar of contemporary European names during the 32 years that followed. For this Pope alone, in the whole of the long succession, maintained his tenure of the Papal chair for 7 years more than the legendary “25 years of Peter.” His successor, Leo XIII., came nearest to him, as we shall see, with his pontificate of 25 years and 3 months’ duration.

**An acorn destined to grow into a venerable oak.**

Some of us are old enough to remember vividly still the peculiar and widespread interest, not to say sensation, awakened by the news of Pio Nono’s death on February 7th, 1878. It meant to Romanists the passing from the earthly scene of one who had not only been, for longer than most of them could remember, the protagonist of Papal interests and policy, but also the fount to them of a spiritual authority to which, from childhood, they had been taught to bow implicitly as divine. Even to those outside the Roman pale it signified the disappearance of a long-familiar picturesque and often pathetic figure, who had been symbolic for more than a generation of the contentions of the Vatican, and of the proud pretensions of an arrogant ecclesiastical system which, to the amazement of all independent and thoughtful adherents of modern civilisation, had blasphemously presumed to elevate its very human and fallible Head, eight years before his death, to the ostensible position of Infallible Mentor and Ruler of the world.

Giovanni Maria Gianbattista Pietro Pellegrino Isidoro Mastai Ferretti—to give him for once in full the very ample name bestowed on him in baptism—was born at Sinigaglia, in the Marches, within the states of the Church, on May 13th, 1792. He came of a stock of Lombard extraction, some of whom, in earlier times, had gained military distinction, and his father, who was of noble rank, designated Giovanni to a military career.

This quite fell in with the predilections of the young man, who, having completed his education, which was acquired chiefly at the ecclesiastical college at Volterra, and included “little Latin and no Greek,” entered in 1810, with considerable zest, on a soldier’s training and a soldier’s life. The rôle was

one for which he seemed specially well fitted, and which he sustained for a few years with considerable élan. He was not only a youth of handsome presence and genial humour, but was distinguished by a keenly martial spirit and bearing which won for the dashing young officer admiration as well as liking. What wonder if Mastai Ferretti was tempted to swagger a little, and to give way thus early to what has been pronounced "the ruling passion in every portion of his strangely varied career"—the love of approbation! One of his biographers, kindly enough disposed to him (T. Adolphus Trollope), has said of Pio Nono that "the desire to figure advantageously before the eyes of men was never for an instant dead within him." It made him "a melodramatic dandy" in his early days, "a melodramatic bishop" in mid-time of his years, and "a melodramatic octogenarian Pontiff"—never at a loss to "strike an attitude" suitable to the occasion, or forgetful to observe, with the aid of his majestic figure and resonant, mellifluous voice, "the artistic proprieties of the position."

The popular young son of Mars was, not unnaturally, a special favourite and hero with the fair sex, and far from indisposed to share, it is said, in those philandering love-adventures in which soldiers are often prone to indulge in the piping times of peace. There is, indeed, a tradition of at least one serious attachment having possessed his heart which might have led on to matrimony, and have thereby altered the whole bent of his future career.

### **A momentous turning-point in his history.**

It appeared as if Mastai Ferretti, having obtained in 1815 a place in the Guardia Nobile, the bodyguard of Pius VII., was destined to follow out no higher ambition than the winning of further military distinction and promotion. But the Divinity that shapes our ends, to issues we wot not of in our own rough-hewing, had other things in store for the smart young officer Ferretti. He fell into ill-health—whether or not as the result of his own "indiscretions," as some allege—and was subject to epileptic seizures, frequent and severe. On the advice of the friendly Pope, to whom he was distantly related, and encouraged by a legendary visit of sympathy and guidance from the Madonna herself, to whom he was passionately devoted, he now turned to the Church as a profession. It was doubtful for a time whether he would be strong enough to wear even the cassock instead of the buckler. But his health became sufficiently re-established, by 1818, to enable him to take Orders, and to apply himself assiduously to the minor ecclesiastical functions assigned to him.

### **Climbing the ecclesiastical ladder.**

For a while Mastai Ferretti was put in charge of a foundling hospital in Rome, where he endeared himself to those under his care as well as commended



himself to his superiors. Then, in 1823, the Pope appointed him secretary or "auditor" to a special religio-political mission, conducted by Monsignor Musi as Vicar Apostolic, to the recently-formed Republic of Chile. During his stay of about two years across the Atlantic, which brought him the distinction of being the only Pope, future or actual, who has visited America, he signalled himself no less for prudence than for missionary zeal. Yet the freemasons of Philadelphia claim that he was "liberal" enough to visit one of their lodges.

When Ferretti returned to Rome, in 1825, he was forthwith—though by that time Pius VII. had made way for Leo XII.—appointed a prelate in the Pope's household, and a Canon of Santa Maria in Via Lata. Very soon the rising ecclesiastic was made President of the Apostolic Hospital, with aged poor as well as friendless children under his care. In 1827, he was appointed Archbishop of Spoleto—a poor living, though a dignified position. Then came, in 1832, what was really an important preferment, when he, though an archbishop, was made Bishop of Imola. In this notable see, where he spent the next 14 years of his life, he won golden opinions among those about him, by reason of his unwearying devotion as "the Good Bishop," and also because of the reputation he acquired for liberality, both of purse and of political sentiment.

### A judicious "Liberal" while Bishop and Cardinal.

There are many stories of the largeness of his charities and of his patriotic interventions on behalf of certain members of his flock who had imperilled their personal safety by revealing too plainly their revolutionary proclivities during the turbulent outbreak which occurred immediately after Gregory XVI.'s election to the Papal chair. Between the repressive forces of a reactionary Papal policy, abetted by Austria, and the insurgent fervours of those crying out for justice and freedom, and yearning for a free and united Italy, the Bishop of Imola—which was rather a storm-centre and occupied an exposed position—had a difficult part to play. But Ferretti was equal to the occasion. His views at this early period were much more enlightened and conciliatory than those of the reigning Pope and his Secretary of State, Lambruschini—a truth of which the people of Imola, and others, were convinced. But he cannot have pressed reforming opinions in a way to give serious umbrage at the Vatican, since Gregory saw fit to send him as Nuncio on a mission to Naples, and even raised him to the Cardinalate in 1840. He was still retained, however, for another six years, in charge of his Imola diocese, and was not called to Rome till the summons came to attend the Conclave convened to choose, in June, 1846, a successor to Gregory XVI. Vain as he often afterwards showed himself to be, it can hardly be supposed that John Mastai Ferretti presumed to forecast beforehand what the result of that Conclave was to be.

Whatever their bishop may have thought himself about his chances at the coming Conclave, the good people of Imola already saw in him the future Pontiff, and saluted him as such with tearful acclamation in bidding him God-speed for Rome. The credulous declare that, as a gracious omen of what was coming, a snow-white dove alighted and rested on his carriage all the way to the Eternal City, and then persistently hovered over the door of the Council.

### Election of the New Pope.

No doubt there were others besides the Cardinal-bishop of Imola's own parishioners—some within the Conclave, and many without—who, for the sake of "young Italy," had set their hearts on seeing Mastai Ferretti Pope. A pasquinade posted in Rome overnight found many appreciative readers—"If God elects, we shall have Bianchi; if the devil elects, we shall have Lambruschini; if the people elect, we shall have Ferretti." But it was known that the Jesuits had no liking for either the saintly and ambitionless Bianchi or the "liberal" Ferretti, and would put their whole weight into the scale for the despotic reactionary, Lambruschini. Ferretti's chances seemed, therefore, slight against so powerful a rival; and in the first ballot he had only 16 votes to 32 cast for Cardinal Lambruschini. There are, however, curious twists and incalculable evolutions sometimes during "the manufacture" of a Pope, and when the final ballot was taken, it was found that the various groups had so settled themselves that, out of the 50 Cardinals present, 36 had voted for Ferretti. He was accordingly, after a Conclave lasting barely 50 hours—the shortest on record—proclaimed Pope, amid the gleeful huzzas of the multitude.

### Causes contributing to the choice of Ferretti.

Lambruschini, wily intriguer as he was, had unwittingly contributed to his rival's success. Made confident by the result of the opening vote, he had hurried forward the election, lest additional Cardinals should arrive who might upset what he believed would now assuredly be the balance of parties in his favour. But the voting result was not only against him, but irrevocable. The very next day after Pio Nono's proclamation, and just while the Papal benediction was being dispensed, *Urbi et Orbi*, from the loggia of St. Peter's, Cardinal Gaysbruck arrived in hot haste as the bearer of Austria's veto against the election of Mastai Ferretti. But it was too late! The old reactionary, who would have been a willing tool of Austria, had already been decisively consigned to a back seat, and the representative, as was supposed, of progressive opinions, securely elevated to the highest place. The cause of Ferretti had from the first been championed by the followers of Mazzini, and it may be admitted that the wire pullers of the secret societies had not been over-scrupulous in their methods of counter-intrigue. It is said that they even conveyed dark hints of probable assassination, if they should vote wrong, to some of the Cardinals.



Whatever mingling forces brought it about, the choice of the benign Ferretti was no doubt better for the Papacy than that of his opponent, Lambruschini, who, with shrivelled frame and malign countenance, is said to have looked every inch "the Man of Sin." Yet for Mastai Ferretti himself—if he could have foreseen all that his new responsibility was to involve him in—it might have been a happier lot to have been left to the continued cure of his see at Imola. Some sense of this may have been present to him when—unless they were mere words of conventional humility such as Popes are wont to use on such occasions—he wrote, in announcing his election to his kindred as a dread promotion—"I embrace you, dear brothers, with all my heart in Jesus Christ. But, far from exulting, **pity** your brother, who sends to all of you the Apostolic Benediction. Pio Nono."

#### **Exaggerated hopes at the opening of the new Pontificate.**

It was not long before it appeared that far more had been expected of the new Pope in the way of drastic reform than he was prepared to concede. When the amnesty to political offenders was published and the prison doors were flung open to many hundreds of the victims of Pope Gregory's oppression, the Romans went almost frantic with joy.

The whole of Rome was brilliantly illuminated that night, with two very marked exceptions—the palaces of Lambruschini and the Austrian ambassador. And Pio Nono continued to commend himself to the populace, as a "Pope-Patriot," by useful if minor instalments of reform. He did away with fiscal abuses, levied taxes on the clergy as well as on the laity, passed laws favourable to the labouring classes, dismissed the foreign guard and replaced it by a native one, and even granted a popular "Constitution" of a sort—well hedged in, however, by restrictions which left real control in the hands of the Curia.

During the latter half of 1846 and the whole of 1847, he continued to be, we are told, "what no Pope had been for centuries, the most popular man in Rome." With Cardinal Gizzi—a much abler protagonist of liberal ideas and attempts—beside him as his Secretary of State, there seemed no limit to what might be looked for in the way of generous concessions to the cause of liberty.

#### **Golden opinions abroad as well as at Home.**

He was careful also to cultivate good relations abroad, by replacing Gregory's reactionary legates to foreign Courts by men of at least somewhat more of sweet reasonableness. In the firm stand he made in 1847 against the Austrian invasion at Ferrera, he thus secured the backing of Britain as well as of France: and the enthusiasm for the idealistic advancing Pontiff prevalent in Italy seemed to spread everywhere in Europe. "Viva Pio Nono!" These few melodious words, shouted with loud acclaim, as a pæan of praise and

a clarion call to progressive endeavour, found an echo in many hearts in different lands. Even groups of Protestants in England—though not, the writer trusts, in Scotland!—were so far left to themselves as to join in the chorus :

A health to Pope Pius, the Ninth of the name,  
A health to fair Italy's hope :  
Ev'n though we set Exeter Hall in a flame,  
By proposing the health of the Pope."

Yet dark clouds began to gather, and soon the storm burst, with terrifying effect. The Pope, no longer their idol, had to flee from his own subjects. On November 25th, 1848, he made his escape from Rome to Gaeta, across the Neapolitan border, in the disguise of a footman. And from that day forward, Pio Nono was a " liberal " no more !

Soon after his elevation to the Papal Chair, Pio Nono had been made to feel that the life of a would-be reforming Pontiff was not a very happy one. He found himself confronted by troublesome conflicting forces, from two opposite sides. Within the Church there emerged a party cleavage between the intransigent adherents to the obscurantist and despotic policy of the late Pope Gregory, and the sympathizers with Pope Pius in his, very mild after all, liberalizing programme. Every smallest concession proposed by " the Piani " was anathema to " the Gregoriani," whose resolute watchword concerning things ecclesiastical or social was "*Sint ut sunt aut non sint.*" Outside ecclesiastical circles, again, the Pope had to reckon with the growingly fervent and aggressive and powerful movement for political freedom and Italian unification. It found inspiration in Dante's impeachment of the Church of Rome—" mixing two governments that ill assort, hath missed her footing, fallen into the mire "; and its very able leaders, discriminating between the things of God and the things which belong to Cæsar, steadily and adroitly and indomitably worked for their ideal of " a free Church in a free State." Every concession granted by Pio Nono was accepted by them as merely welcome *pro tanto*, and made a fulcrum for demanding more.

### Flight of the Pope from Rome to Gaeta.

The upshot of it all was that the Pope, badgered and perplexed, found himself jostled between the devil and the deep sea, and completely lost his nerve. He was worsted alike in the ecclesiastical and in the political domain. He incurred the resentment of the reactionary prelates and aroused the susceptibilities and suspicions of the Catholic powers—especially of Austria and France, both of which desired to maintain a hold over the Vatican and to thwart every move in the direction of a free and strong united Italy. On the other



hand, by trying to blow both hot and cold on the Italian movement, he alienated and exasperated its leaders; and, by his halting attempts to make the recently granted "Constitution" workable and palatable to the democracy, under the limiting conditions which he immovably maintained to be essential to the sovereignty of the head of the Catholic Church, he brought upon himself, instead of adulation, the ridicule and even execration of the Roman people.

Matters came to a height when Count Rossi, the Pope's Prime Minister, a man earnestly bent on reconciling the claims of popular freedom and expansion with those of papal authority, was foully assassinated on the slopes of the Quirinal, while proceeding to open the new session of the Senate in the beginning of November, 1848. There was general consternation. Most of the Cardinals, as quickly as might be, including Lambruschini, trekked out of Rome; and the Pope himself, as we have already noted, escaped on the 25th of that month to Gaeta, on the coach-box and with the sheltering aid of an Austrian lady benefactress, Countess Spaur.

#### **The White Pope falls into the hands of the Jesuits.**

Pio Nono remained in Gaeta and neighbourhood for a year and a half, which gave him abundant opportunity to meditate on the vanity of human wishes. Only a few months before, he had ordered the Jesuits out of Rome. But during his exile he fell completely under their power: and he, the White Pope, became thenceforth, even after regaining his former pomp, little better in matters of policy than a glorified puppet in the hands of the Black Pope ("Papa Nero"), the invisible but potent head of the "Society of Jesus." It was a very convincing argument, which, if all be true, the exiled Pope's advisers breathed into his ear at Gaeta—"The Society of Loyola will make you a great Pope, if you will do its bidding; if not, remember Ganganelli, and do not eat figs or even drink of the chalice at Mass." However it may be as regards the conveyance of so explicit a warning counsel, Pio Nono was all too manifestly under Jesuit dominance for the rest of his long and chequered life.

After the flight of the Pope, a republic was set up in Rome under a triumvirate, of whom Mazzini was the chief. But, of course, it could not stand before the might of the foreign powers, whose aid Pius, in his extremity, invoked. Louis Napoleon, President of the French Republic, seeing that Austria was tightening her grasp elsewhere on Italy, sent an army, under General Oudinot, to Rome, ostensibly in the Pope's interests, which speedily overpowered the gallant Garibaldi and his red-shirts, after a brave resistance, in July, 1849. This event restored predominance to the Papal party in Rome, under French supervision. But the Pope refused to return at once to his capital, preferring to commit the government there to three cardinals, who

took the place of the republican triumvirate, rescinding their acts and freely arresting their prominent supporters.

His foreign policy Pio Nono meanwhile conducted himself from Gaeta, with Cardinal Antonelli beside him as guide, philosopher and evil genius. This Antonelli was one of the most crafty, unscrupulous and sinister figures of last century, and, as an invaluable ally of the Jesuits, exercised a complete mastery over Papal policy till death removed him shortly before the close of Pius IX.'s pontificate. From the time of the Pope's return to Rome, in April, 1850, Antonelli held the office of Secretary of State, and a more astute minister no Pope ever had, though his cunning sometimes over-reached itself. Happily for Italy and Europe, Antonelli's cleverness and chicanery were no match for the genius and superb statesmanship of the great Cavour. Into the intricacies of the long-drawn-out contest of wits between them, and the subtle and strangely changeful parts played by France and Austria in the conflict, we cannot here enter. Suffice it to say that the "non possumus" of the Pope and the wiles of Antonelli, supported as they were by such powerful foreign coadjutors, could not stay the onward march of Cavour's high-souled patriotic policy, patiently pursued till, albeit after that noble Sardinian minister was dead, it was crowned with complete victory by the entry into Rome of his royal master and instrument, Victor Emmanuel, on 20th September, 1870, and his firm establishment there as the King, honoured and beloved, of a United Italy.

### Pio Nono's Failure as a Statesman.

As regards internal administration, a policy of "thorough," in a reactionary sense, was instituted in Rome immediately after Pio Nono's return from Gaeta, and was prosecuted for a time with unsparing severity. He was, no doubt, personally opposed on principle, and irreconcilably so, to the idea of the Pope of Rome being rationed in authority to the limits of "a constitutional Sovereign"; and to every attempt in that direction one can understand his oft-reiterated "non possumus!" But, though his "ungrateful children" had sorely disappointed him, the crushing methods and measures which, at this epoch, were employed by the Vatican, can hardly have been inspired by a man of Pio Nono's disposition and predilections. They were no doubt attributable to Antonelli and his henchmen, who took the bit in their teeth and ran such riot in the infliction of fines, forfeitures, imprisonments and executions as to call forth protests from abroad. The Pope, however, was at least culpable in so far as he tamely acquiesced in these enormities.

The vindictive cruelties of the repressive period which immediately followed on the re-instatement of Pope Pius after his return from exile, did not, and could not, last long. The harshness of domestic administration was softened. But the Papal policy continued to be reactionary and neglectful of the public



weal, devoid of serious effort by the Pontiff for amelioration. The management of affairs was more and more entirely abandoned to the control of Antonelli and his facile satellites.

The truth is that Pio Nono, disillusioned by the non-success of his endeavours to be a powerful, and at the same time popular, Pope-King, now became filled with a new and more expansive ambition, viz., to become world-famous as a peerless Churchman, a Pope unrivalled as an authority in the domain of ecclesiasticism and theology. For the first rôle he showed some aptitude; for the second, his qualifications were slender indeed. But Jesuit flattery goaded and Jesuit diplomacy guided him in both.

### England, and then Scotland, annexed to the Roman See.

One of his most notable ecclesiastical exploits was achieved as early as 1850, when, under Jesuit direction, he successfully carried through the Papal aggression on England, erecting a Roman Catholic Archbishopric at Westminster, with twelve suffragan bishops named from the principal cities of the kingdom. This raised a loud outcry, and Lord John Russell had a "Catholic Titles Bill" passed, which was very soon suffered, however, to become obsolete. Hence one of "Punch's" most famous cartoons, representing Lord John as a boy scribbling "No Popery" on the wall—and then running round the corner! The Romish hierarchy, firmly established in England, was extended in 1878 to include Scotland also, in total disregard of the old Scottish Parliament's "Act for Abolishing the Jurisdiction of the Pope." The most earnest and subtle endeavours of the Papacy since then have been concentrated on making *de facto* what it has so long regarded as its *de jure* right—to bring Britain to heel as an appanage of the Roman See.

It would be interesting, had space permitted, to trace the steps of Pio Nono's self-gratulatory progress as an illustrious Churchman. Now canonising saints (such as Liguori!)—now scattering indulgences—now encouraging pilgrimages, and putting his imprimatur on quasi-miracles—now issuing encyclicals or defining what had formerly been mere pious opinions into binding dogmas of the Creed—he was obsessed with the determination to have his name writ large and shining, as a theological thinker and legislator, on the banner of the Church's history.

### What Pius IX. counted the chief glories of his Career.

In the summary of the glories of his régime, penned by Pio Nono himself, with the Jesuits at his elbow, on the occasion of his semi-jubilee as Pope, in 1871, he signalises categorically his chief Pontifical achievements. One of these is—"We have extended the hierarchy to new regions"—referring especially to the impudent annexation of Britain to the map of the Papal See,

accomplished by "shrouding under the garb of religion the stiletto meant for the heart of British freedom." Other three were of such importance that they must be at least recorded here.

One was the proclamation on 8th December, 1854, by the Bull "*Ineffabilis Deus*," of the *Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God*—"that the most Blessed Virgin was preserved from every stain of original sin from the first instant of her conception"—thus made a binding dogma, which has done so much since to change the religion of Jesus, within the Roman pale, into sheer Mariolatry.

Another was the promulgation, exactly ten years later, on 8th December, 1864, of the *Syllabus*, a remarkable official document in which he flatly ran counter to modern civilisation, and impaled with the Papal anathema popular claims to civil and religious liberty, freedom of conscience and of the Press, and other prevalent "errors of the age."

Lastly, there came his crowning achievement—at once the acme of his glory and the nadir of his humiliation—when, on 18th July, 1870, he proclaimed his virtual self-deification, in the promulgation of the Papal Infallibility Decree. By an irony of fate, the Infallibile One had to call in the aid of a candle to enable him to read it, amid a darkening and nerve-shaking thunderstorm, before the assembled Fathers of the famous Vatican (Ecumenical Council, the concurrence of a great majority of whom had been skilfully jockeyed by the Jesuits.

#### The Vatican Council "only adjourned": but till When?

"We have convoked the Vatican Council, and *have only adjourned it* because of the war." This dignified declaration was meant to save the Pope's face, as indicating that there were still other important subjects to be œcumenically discussed and determined, but that, owing to the altered European situation, he found it wiser and safer to suspend further sessions of the Council till a more convenient season. More than half a century has elapsed, and the Council has neither been dissolved nor re-assembled. It may be regarded, therefore, as having simply "petered out." There was a hiatus of 300 years between the authoritative Councils of Trent and of the Vatican. In the light of painful experience, will the Papacy, within a like or longer period, venture on another?

#### Futile yearning for restoration of the Temporal Sovereignty.

For the few remaining years of his life, Pio Nono kept yearning and even sometimes hoping for the full restoration of his temporal sovereignty. He shut himself up as a self-immured "prisoner" in the Vatican, sullenly repelling any friendly approach from the Italian Government, and obstinately refusing the

benefits it offered to the Church under the Law of Guarantees. Hope deferred made his heart increasingly sick, his spirit more peevish, and his temper more ungoverned. He was by no means a silent sufferer. His old *bonhomie* changed to scolding petulance. Many a wail he uttered, craving pity for the sorrows of a poor old man. Many a fierce anathema he hurled at the heads of Victor Emmanuel and other miscreants. He spoke of himself once as a "*Vox clamantis in deserto*," but his lamentations and fulminations alike became less and less heeded by a callous world, which came to regard and treat him as a "*Vox*" and little more.

By a striking providential coincidence, his royal antagonist Victor Emmanuel and the Pope were summoned from the arena of earthly affairs within a month of one another—the King on 10th January and the Pontiff on 7th February, 1878. Their bodies lay simultaneously in state for reverential public view—the one in the historic Pantheon, with dome open to the sky, and the other in the great Basilica of St. Peter's. There could be no mistaking the transcendence of the grief and admiring affection manifested by the Italian people over the loss of the King, in comparison with the degree of emotion evoked by the death of the once idolized Pope. The former was bequeathing to his son Umberto the throne of a United Italy, whose cohesiveness and strength and world-importance have steadily grown and vindicated for it a front-rank place among the European Powers. Pius IX. was transmitting to his successor and successors a legacy of difficulties not yet removed and of intricate problems not yet successfully solved.

#### Lord Acton's summing up of Pius IX.

Pio Nono had a boundless belief in himself, and cherished to the end a comfortable and sustaining sense of his own infallibility and of the incomparable dignity and adequacy with which he comported himself as Vice-gerent of God and Vicar of Jesus Christ. He certainly lacked one gift, pronounced so desirable by Scotland's national poet—"the gift to see himself as others saw him."

Here, e.g.—and with this we close—is how Lord Acton, one of the most perspicacious and fearlessly candid of English Roman Catholic writers, diagnosed him:—"Pius is '*totus teres atque rotundus*,' firm and immovable, smooth and hard as marble, mindless and ignorant, without any understanding of the mental conditions and needs of mankind, without any notion of the character of foreign nations, but as credulous as a nun, and above all penetrated through with reverence for his own person as the organ of the Holy Ghost, and therefore an absolutist from head to heel, and filled with the thought, '*I, and none beside me*.'" (Letters from Rome on the Council, by Quirinus, 1870, p. 803).



CHAPTER VII.  
THE PONTIFICATE OF LEO XIII. (1878-1903).

**G**IOACCHINO VINCENZO RAFFAELE LUIGI PECCI, destined to be by-and-by Pope Leo XIII., was born at Carpineto, within the States of the Church, on March 2nd, 1810. The place of his birth was an old Volscian town, abounding in antiquities. Even its more modern buildings, churches and hospitals and palaces, have an old-world look. The Pecci palace itself is not distinguished by architectural beauty, but it evidently is very old. And older still was the family that long inhabited it.

**Joachim Pecci's Parentage.**

Count Ludovico Pecci, who held a Colonel's commission and was Mayor of Carpineto, had among his ancestors many persons of note in politics, war, and churchmanship. His wife, Anne Prosperi Busi, also came of an old patrician stock, that claimed descent from Rienzi the tribune. Thus their offspring had nothing to complain of, on either side of the family tree, in the matter of heredity. The pair had seven children, of whom Joachim was the sixth, and of whom by the year 1890 he was the sole survivor.

Young Pecci seems to have had a genuine regard for both his parents—particularly for his mother, who was evidently a woman of great intelligence and strength of character. It is told of her that, during a period when the domestic exchequer was low, owing to political disturbances, she betook herself to the cultivation of silkworms, in order especially to provide for the education of her sons, Joseph and Joachim. Nor was her motherly zeal left unrewarded; for one of the two, Joseph, though his early teacher pronounced him “a young scamp,” developed into a Cardinal, and the other, Joachim, whom the same authority called “a little angel” into the Pope of Rome.

Both brothers were sent in 1818 to the training school of Viterbo, to be under the supervision of Father Uboldini, the critic quoted above, and other Jesuit fathers. In 1821, the future Pope received his first Communion, and wrote a Latin sonnet on the occasion, the reading of which, when it came into his hands 75 years later, melted the old man to tears. In November, 1824, young Pecci entered the Collegio Romano, as one of its 1,400 scholars, and applied himself with unflagging zeal to his studies during the seven years' curriculum there. “His desk,” we are told, “was his world, and the only roads he knew were those to Church and School.” Any money he got was spent on books, his prime favourites being the works of Thomas Aquinas. In the College competitions, he came out first for Latin verses. He also stood first in public oration, his pre-eminence in which brought him the honour of heading the students' deputation to Leo XII. on occasion of his jubilee, and of voicing a congratulatory address whose choice diction called forth the admiration of the Pontiff. Another of his early oratorical exploits was the maintaining of a thesis on Indulgences, to the pronounced satisfaction of Father Perrone and his other teachers.

It does not appear that Joachim was definitely designated at first for the priesthood. His own ambition, while at the Roman College, was just "to do something for the honour of the family." His entrance later on the Academy of the Nobility, in 1832, still only indicated that he was under preparation either for the priesthood or for diplomacy. It seemed indeed for a while that it was in the diplomatic arena he was destined to shine. His own inclinations in that direction were strongly encouraged by Cardinal Sala, whose powerful influence, along with the young man's abilities and aspirations, secured for him rapid promotion. He had the further advantage of gaining the notice and favour of Pope Gregory (Capellari), and up to the age of 27 everything betokened his being launched on the career of a distinguished diplomat.

### A severe illness, and its Result.

But an event occurred in 1837, which gave a new direction to the young man's history. The scourge of cholera then ravaged Rome, and he showed grave symptoms of the plague. In prospect of probable death, young Pecci made his will—"commending his soul to God and the most holy Mary," and assigning all his worldly possessions to his brothers, on condition of their providing "50 masses annually for five years, for the repose of his soul." So little did the youth of 27 foresee the long earthly career before him!

On his unexpected recovery, Pecci devoted himself body and soul to the service of religion, and rapidly passed through the stages of sub-deacon and deacon to the rank of a fully ordained priest. After celebrating his first Mass, he told his patron, Sala, that he had thoughts of becoming a Jesuit; but the Cardinal, still hankering after retaining such a promising pupil for the diplomatic service, secured for him forthwith the post of Papal delegate to the disturbed province of Benevento, near Rome. There he was stationed for three years of yeoman service—instituting various reforms, and gaining for himself a reputation, both as a brave curber of the brigands and as a firmly impartial administrator among the hardly less rapacious nobility. Transferred next to Perugia, he accomplished, in the course of 18 months, such a remarkable work of governmental re-organisation and social betterment there, that the Pope, on occasion of visiting the place, said to his so capable a representative: "When I return to Rome, I will remember you."

### Consecrated as Archbishop, and sent as Nuncio to Brussels.

The year 1843 marked a notable epoch in Pecci's history. He was then appointed to the important post of Papal Nuncio to Brussels. Before setting out, he was raised to the Episcopate by Gregory XVI., with the *in partibus* title of "Archbishop of Damietta," the consecration ceremony being performed by Cardinal Lambruschini. Arrived at the Belgian capital, the youthful Nuncio made a most favourable impression everywhere. Relations between the Belgian government and the Roman hierarchy were at that time considerably strained, but Pecci speedily ingratiated himself with the representatives of both sides, and became a reconciling influence between them. Though so modest as to be

set down by some as timid, he was really pursuing a definite policy with unwavering tenacity and shrewdness. In the educational embroilment, he strenuously supported the bishops against the government, and led them to victory. We find him much impressed with the material progress of Belgium, and in particular with the institution of railways, then unknown in Italy. In an account of the opening of a railway between Brussels and Namur, at which he was present, along with other members of the diplomatic corps, he gravely but amusingly records—"Nothing is more agreeable than riding like this, at 20 miles an hour! The most delightful views *sped past, like a dream or an optical illusion.*" What would the good man have felt like, during a flight through the skies in a modern aeroplane?

### Made Bishop of Perugia in 1846.

At the expiry of his three years' service in Belgium, Pecci was appointed to the bishopric of Perugia, early in 1846. There were warm expressions of regret over his departure, not only from the Archbishop of Brussels, but from the Belgian King, who bestowed on him the Grand Cordon of the Order of Leopold, and recommended him to the special favour of the Pope.

Before settling again in Italy, Monsignor Pecci had laid up interesting recollections of other countries besides Belgium. These included France, where he met with Louis Philippe, and England, where he took counsel with Wiseman, and was presented to the Queen. When he reached Rome, he found Pope Gregory dead, and the Conclave assembled, which resulted in the election and coronation of Pius IX.

Pecci's tenure of the Episcopate was coterminous with Pio Nono's Popedom, lasting from 1846 to 1878, when his own Pontificate began. It covered a period when Italy was again and again, especially about 1849, 1860 and 1870, swept with revolution. How the Bishop of Perugia comported himself and impressed the revolutionaries, let one of their leaders, Urban Ratazzi, testify: "This Pecci is a man of undeniable merit. He is gifted with great energy and power of management, coupled with the mildest manners possible. He is very strongly attached to the Holy See, and his principles are unbending. He will give way *just to the extent that would be expected from a man of the world, and no more.*" Concern for wider interests was not suffered by Bishop Pecci to interfere with the sedulous cultivation of his own vineyard. There were many outward tokens of fruitful activity. He restored the Cathedral, and had 40 Churches built in his diocese, besides founding an Academy dedicated to St. Aquinas, and orphanages, homes for female penitents, societies for indigent priests, and the like. His pastoral letters, in which may be found the germs of some of the Papal encyclicals of later days gave further evidence of his alert mental outlook, dealing as they did with such topics as, "The Church in the Nineteenth Century," "The Church and Civilization," "Popular Errors regarding Religion."

### At length transferred to Rome, and appointed Camerlengo.

It may seem strange that so able a churchman as Pecci should have been left so long at Perugia. Though he received the purple as Cardinal in 1853,



yet for long years he was called but seldom to Rome; and the proposal to give him the See of Albano, in the neighbourhood of the Eternal City, which would have brought him nearer to the centre of affairs, somehow came to nothing. This, and the withholding of him from certain other offices for which he was specially fitted, is believed to have been due to the hostile influence of Cardinal Antonelli. The death in 1876 of this astutest of prelatie schemers was at once followed, in any case, by a change in Pecci's fortunes. Pius IX., now more free to assert his own predilection, made him Camerlengo—the Cardinal, that is to say, who should “preside over the Apostolic assembly, and hold authority over temporal matters, during the interval between the death of one Pope and the election of another.” Sooner, probably, than either of them had imagined, the Camerlengo was called upon to discharge the important duties belonging to this responsible appointment. Pius IX. departed this life on February 7th, 1878; and Cardinal Pecci at once took up his quarters at the Vatican, summoned the other Cardinals, received for the time “the Fisherman’s ring,” and made all the customary preparations for the orderly election of a successor to the deceased Pontiff.

#### Election as Pope in 1878.

The Conclave on this occasion lasted only two days. It quickly appeared what the choice was likely to be. At the first ballot, 23 votes were cast for Pecci; at the second, 38; and at the third ballot, on the following day, February 20th, it was found that the number had increased to 44—being three more votes than the requisite two-thirds majority. It is related that when Cardinal Pecci, then 68 years of age, was informed of the result, he was depressed, and anxiously exclaimed, “Don’t you know what they require of me? I am old and feeble, and shall soon succumb. They are giving me death, and not the Papacy!” Others, however, regarded the prospect more hopefully, and the long years of unremitting service that awaited the new Pope were to more than justify their expectations. On the announcement of the election, all the bells in Rome rang out the old and rang in the new. Then came the customary Papal benediction, *urbi et orbi*, from the Loggia of St. Peter’s, during the giving of which, according to an admiring witness, “the Pope’s tall wasted form, with arms extended, looked like a living cross.” The coronation took place on March 3rd, when, after Mass in the Sistine Chapel, the Triple Crown was placed on the Pontiff’s head, with the formula in Latin: “Receive the triple tiara, and know that thou art the Father of princes and kings, Rector of this world, and the Vicar of our Saviour, Jesus Christ!”

Feeble as he seemed and felt himself to be when he ascended the Papal Chair in 1878, Leo XIII. actually survived to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his coronation, so that, like his predecessor, he falsified the prediction,

"Thou shalt not see the years of Peter." It must be said that, even to the end, his were years of unremitting devotion to his exalted office.

In view of all that had transpired during the preceding decade—the fall of Napoleon III., the discomfiture of France, the seizure of Rome, the unification of Italy, the conflict of the Church, not only with the Italian Government, but with Bismarck and the German Reichstag—it was no bed of roses on which Leo found himself ensconced in being summoned to be the successor of Pius IX. But he bravely faced the music, and set himself in a spirit of wise moderation to seek some amelioration of existing conditions. Pio Nono, who belonged distinctively to the Church militant, had himself said before he died, "I know there must be a change, but it must be left to my successor." And his successor, fully appreciating this necessity, at once set about effecting at least a modicum of change by opportune concession tempered by reserve.

### Pope Leo versus Prince Bismarck.

The situation was most urgently critical in Germany, where the Kultur-Kampf was in acute operation. Prince Bismarck, believing that the recently compacted unity of the German Empire was threatened by Ultra-montane intrigue, was chastising with fines and imprisonment obnoxious and recalcitrant clerics, under the repressive legislation associated with the name of Falk. Serious disorganisation had befallen the Roman Catholic Church in Germany, and everything pointed to matters becoming worse, if some *modus vivendi* could not be established between Berlin and the Vatican. The German problem, therefore, was the first to which Pope Leo addressed himself. Within two months of his accession to the Papedom, he chose a moment when the pressure of socialism made a truce with the Church desirable for the Chancellor, and wrote a highly conciliatory letter to Bismarck's royal master, Wilhelm I., which ended with the plea: "May your Majesty, then, look propitiously upon this melancholy situation, and, without detracting from your sovereign authority, command that the ministers of God and the Catholic people be left free in the observance of the laws and precepts of the Church. Your Majesty may rest assured that we on our part will not fail to see that the peace re-established between the two supreme authorities is preserved with care and increased." The negotiations for which this specious appeal opened the way did much to allay a contest between the Keys and the Sceptre in Germany, of which both parties were by this time heartily weary. Objectionable clerics, who had taken a prominent part in ultramontane propaganda and intrigue, were tactfully withdrawn to fill posts in Italy; and Bismarck, on his side, conceded ere long the practical abolition of the Falk laws and penalties.

The Iron Chancellor had formerly indignantly declared—in allusion to the humiliating ordeal of three days' barefooted supplication before the castle

gates of Canossa to which Henry IV., Emperor of Germany, was subjected by Pope Hildebrand in mid-winter, 1077—" *We shall not go to Canossa!*" But, through the wiles and pressure of the Vatican, Prince Bismarck was brought a good deal nearer to Canossa than he had ever expected to go.

### **Other Diplomatic Successes.**

The opening success, in Germany, of the new Papal diplomacy of conciliation was followed by other successes in different quarters and connections. Within the Church, the Pope knew how to gratify the rival orders of friars—the Dominicans by his advocacy of the Service of the Rosary, and the Franciscans by his encouragement of a Tertiary order little weighted by ascetic rules. External relations with other European powers besides Germany were greatly improved during Leo's pontificate. He succeeded in re-establishing diplomatic connection with Russia, and exchanged friendly courtesies with the Eastern Patriarchate, though nothing practical resulted from the Conference about unity which he convened in 1894.

He held out the olive branch to France through Cardinal Lavigerie, and then issued an encyclical, whose keynote was the wisdom on the part of the faithful of conformity to the government, "whether monarchical or federal, as constituted by the will of the people and shaped by historic evolution."

The *rapprochement* with Germany was so shrewdly followed up, that the Pope's services were accepted as arbiter in the dispute over the Caroline Islands between that country and Spain. Leo's award confirmed Spain's proprietary rights, but secured for American subjects such substantial privileges that both disputants were adroitly satisfied. Prince Bismarck, once regarded as the arch-enemy of the Church, was actually decorated with "The Order of Christ." Nor were reciprocal compliments wanting. At the celebration of Pope Leo's 90th birthday, no felicitations were more intensely worded than those of Wilhelm II., who had already, in 1888 and 1893, paid two personal friendly visits to the Vatican. The extreme cordiality of the subsequent and last meeting between the Pope and the Kaiser, just a few months before Leo's death in 1903, was remarked on at the time as significant, and doubtless helped to solidify the baleful intimacy of relationship between Germany and the Vatican, so unmistakably revealed afterwards during the Great War.

### **The Pope's Attentions to America and Britain.**

In the United States, there were losses, to be arrested if possible, due to a leakage among Roman Catholic emigrants on setting foot upon American soil; also friction to be allayed among those belonging to the Church, arising from their too independent views on education and on Church and State relationship. Monsignor Satolli was accordingly sent out, as the apostolic delegate of the Pope, to make certain social and religious adjustments; and, with the not too smooth-working co-operation of Cardinal Gibbons, he succeeded in pouring oil on the troubled waters.

In the case of Britain, the hand of friendship was repeatedly extended from



the Papal Chair. On various occasions, such as Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, and afterwards at her death, the Pope expressed his profound regard for Her Majesty, and he was never slow to manifest his interest in us.

It was Leo's crowning desire that "the great people of the British Empire" might be brought "within the Catholic unity." He said, in discoursing to a pilgrimage from England, "This I would regard as the great work of my life." His paternal "Letter to the English People" (*Ad Anglos*) of April, 1895, and his official utterances at the inclusion of Scotland within the ground-plan of the Papal hierarchy, pointed in the same direction. The old man, dreaming a dream, may have thought also that he saw a vision of its realisation ahead. In the cherishing of this fond hope, he no doubt found encouragement in the growth and Romeward drift of the retrograde ritualistic party in the Church of England. But he had discrimination enough to perceive, and candour enough to point out, an obstacle in a *sine qua non* whose gravity had, and still has, to be recognised and faced by those amiable visionaries within the Anglican communion, who love to call themselves "Anglo-Catholics." They would have to swallow the dogma of Papal Infallibility, before they could be Catholics at all! It was a shrewd blow to their pretensions, and a sorry damper to the hopes of these misguided men, when the Pope, in his cruelly frank Encyclical (*De Unitate*) of June, 1896, flouted the validity of Anglican orders, and boldly asserted that English bishops and their followers, *apart from subjection to Peter*, are nothing better than "a lawless and disorderly crowd."

### The Insuperable Bar to Anglican Union with Rome.

Lord Halifax and his confraternity of the English Church Union had to be taught the unpalatable truth that they could only have reunion on Rome's own inflexible terms—submission and absorption. *Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia*: "Where Peter is, there is the Church." Anglican priests could only be received into the one true fold on the footing of laymen, and for the legitimate exercise of priestly functions they needed to be not "re-ordained" or "conditionally ordained" (because, as was pitifully pleaded, research *might* show that their orders, "if not certainly valid, were at least not certainly invalid"); nay, but what simply and solely would meet their case was to be *ab initio* ordained, since their so-called orders are really null and void. When one hears at the present hour of covert approaches to Rome, and tentative secret negotiations conducted in high ecclesiastical quarters respecting possible re-union with the Holy See, one can only marvel at the futility of continuing such endeavours—unless, on the Anglican side, it is contemplated that the extreme concession might be made, if necessary, of going the whole way to meet Rome by yielding all her claims.

The boast of the Roman Catholic Church, that she is *semper eadem*, ever the same, is a claim she must ceaselessly seek to vindicate. Her authorities fully recognise that it would be suicidal for her to do otherwise, or to consent to any surrender of her essential principles and prerogatives. Especially since the irreversible Vatican Decree of 1870, the Roman Church system is stereotyped. Cardinal Vaughan's was a true and timely utterance, which all enthusiasts for Reunion who are outside Rome's pale would do well to lay to heart, when he firmly asserted that "to the Catholic Church the Decrees of Trent and of the Vatican are as sacred and irrevocable as those of Nicaea and Chalcedon, and corporate reunion must be preceded by the acceptance of these in their fulness—involving on the part of the Anglican Church a public disavowal of its past."

With all his desire for re-union, any reliable sign of whose near approach would, he declared, make him ready to sing his "*Nunc Dimittis*," Pope Leo held steadfastly by the traditional Roman position. The words "*Non possumus*" did not so often escape his lips as they did in the case of his predecessor; but he was at one with him in his main convictions.

### Papal Attitude to Bible Societies.

Both Popes were at one, for example, on the subject of Bible circulation, both adhering to the traditional Papal attitude. Pius VII. had, in 1816, denounced Bible Societies "as a crafty device by which the very foundations of religion are undermined, a pestilence which must be remedied or abolished"—re-affirming "that, agreeably to the Index, the Bible printed by heretics is to be numbered among other prohibited books."

In the train of that first Pope of the nineteenth century, Leo XII., Pius VIII. and Pius IX. followed with like virulent denunciations of Protestant Bible Societies. Leo XIII., on his part, in an Apostolic Constitution of January, 1897, similarly lays it down that "all versions in the vernacular, even by Catholics, are altogether prohibited, unless approved by the Holy See," and that "all versions of the Holy Bible in any vernacular made by non-Catholics are prohibited, and especially those published by the Bible Societies." In keeping with these Pontifical utterances, was Cardinal Wiseman's sweeping assertion—"We must deny to Protestantism any right to use the Bible, much more to interpret it."

### "The Prisoner of the Vatican" in relation to a United Italy.

In the political domain, Leo XIII., with all his natural suavity, was hardly less intransigent, really, than his predecessor. This was specially apparent in his attitude toward the Italian Government. He maintained the pose of "Prisoner of the Vatican" as obdurately as Pio Nono, spurning Italian offers tending to greater pecuniary comfort and official dignity, unless accompanied by the absolute possession of the Eternal City and its environs, nothing short of which would secure for him, as he held, his pontifical independence. The undisguised, though sometimes underhand, hostility of the Vatican to the Quirieuil was an unhappy as well as unprofitable element in Leo's policy. He went the length of charging the faithful to take no part in national politics, and there is too much ground for believing that, at that period, the Papacy connived at, if it did not actually foment, the forces of disorder in the Italian



peninsula, and regarded with complacency every blow struck at Italian unity.

Pope Leo lived even to the end an arduously busy life. It was computed that in 1900, for example, "besides issuing eight encyclicals and twenty apostolic letters and several poems, he officiated at seventy functions in St. Peter's, received 225 pilgrimages, and gave audiences to 4,000 personages"—a sufficiently heavy programme for a fragile old man in his 90th year!

Some of his allocutions, on such subjects as Nihilism, Communism, Agrarianism, the Slave Trade, Anti-Semitism and the Unity of the Race, were listened to with respect by those without as well as within his jurisdiction. But when he handled such topics as the Origin of the Civil Power, he encountered sharp dissent, and his frequent wails and "shrill menaces, as the Lear of thankless children," induced more weariness than sympathy, at least among those outside the pale of his authority.

Uneasy lies the head that wears a tiara, especially one on which impious damaging hands have been laid! But Joachim Pecci, in his private capacity, found solace in a retired, simple, tranquil life. Hard worker as he was, and frugal to a degree in his style of living, he was no gloomy ascetic.

One of his favourite pastimes was the composition of Latin verse, for whose Latinity an enthusiastic biographer, Julian de Narbon, claims that it combines "the conciseness of Tacitus, the richness of Cicero, and the grace of Sallust"! He enjoyed regularly, for 30 years, his game of chess with Father Guila, a skilful but touchy opponent, whose irascibility over impending defeat would sometimes cause the Pope to "stop the game, and deliver a timely little homily in praise of self-conquest and Christian renunciation." Leo XIII. does not appear to have been a smoker—unlike Pius IX., who, in spite of Innocent X.'s brief, proscribing tobacco, paid devotion to "Lady Nicotine"—who has even more devotees than "Our Lady of Lourdes." But Leo had a cherished companion in his "snuff-mull," and dearly loved a pinch—notwithstanding the threat of Urban VIII. to excommunicate anyone who dared such an enormity within the precincts of the Vatican.

### **His Passing Before the Supreme Tribunal.**

Leo XIII. showed great tenacity of life, and used confidently to predict, in consideration of the longevity of the Pecci race, that like his grandfather he would live to the age of 96. But even Popes are not infallible, when they attempt to read the horoscope of the future about such eventualities. The slender form became more and more attenuated, the lips more bloodless, the forehead more pale; the whole appearance increasingly suggestive of "a living skeleton." Then came the last and fatal illness, whose course the best expert skill of the renowned doctors, Lapponi and Mazzoni, could not arrest. The bright, lustrous searching eyes closed in death, and the once clear and resonant voice was stilled. A picturesque figure had disappeared from earth on the afternoon of Monday, the 20th of July, 1903. And the man Joachim Pecci, who had accepted and worn for five and twenty years the name of "the Vicar of Jesus Christ," had passed before the Supreme Tribunal, where respect of persons is unknown.

THE END.



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